

Foster Parents

Changing Lives One Child at a Time

September 2006



“Teach your children well...”
– Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young

For all of you who help teach your children well every day, serving as role models and advocates for them, we say thank you.

Teaching children well is hard work. Staff members at Children’s Administration recognize that children in foster care often face more difficult challenges in school because they often have gaps in their education. That is why programs have been started to help you help them succeed in school. With the start of the new school year, we offer you some tips for you to help your kids.

AGE GROUP	RECOMMENDATIONS
pre-Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Read to your child at least once a day.■ Get a library card with your child and take them to the library regularly.■ Limit television viewing.*Enroll child in preschool.
Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Express high (but not unrealistic) expectation for achievement and future career.■ Create a well-lit, quiet, neat and well-supplied study area.■ Read with your children once a day.■ Limit television viewing and video games.
Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Create a well-lit, quiet, neat and well-supplied study area.■ Identify the time of day that your child works best and establish a regular daily homework time.■ Set concrete weekly and long-term goals for school.■ Express high (but not unrealistic) expectation for achievement and future career.■ Limit television viewing and video games.
High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Create a well-lit, quiet, neat and well-supplied study area.■ Identify the time of day that your child works best and establish a regular daily homework time.■ Set concrete weekly and long-term goals for school.■ Help your child identify and enroll courses that are required for colleges and post-secondary training
All Ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Help children identify their unique abilities, aptitudes and interests and express high expectation for future academic and career achievement.■ Identify the time of day that your child works best and establish a regular daily homework routine.■ Create a well-lit, quiet, neat and well-supplied area for studying and reading.

To keep your child moving ahead, it is most important to keep in communication with the teachers, counselors and others in their school.

But if you need advice or guidance on issues related to school, you can make use of the state's new Educational Advocacy specialists. Ask your social worker to put you in touch with an advocate who can help you and serve as a liaison with school officials.

Finally, some of you will have adolescents who may be looking ahead to college. Children's Administration has a new Foster Care to College program that you may find helpful. Resources are increasingly available to help young people in foster care to have the opportunity of college. Please contact your social worker or Marianne Ozmun, 360-902-7928 or ozmk300@dshs.wa.gov.

Important Numbers

Important numbers to know when you take care of children in foster care or are thinking about doing so:

Statewide information about becoming a foster or adoptive parent: *Why Foster* statewide telephone line at 1-800-760-5340 or whyfoster@seattlemca.org Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message and receive a return call within 24 hours.

Statewide information about receiving foster parent support: *Families for Kids*: 1-888-794-1794 or www.familiesforkids.org Monday – Friday, 9:00 – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message. Receive a return call by the next business day.

Kitsap and Pierce County information about becoming a foster parent or to receive foster parent support: *Foster Care Resource Network*, 1-253-677-8122. Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message and receive a return call by the next business day.

General foster parent information for the state of Washington/FPAWS: *Foster Parent Association of Washington State*, 1-800-391-CARE (2273) or www.fpaws.org. FPAWS is seeking new members and supporting foster parents in many ways, including referrals to local associations.

Support for foster parents under investigation for allegations of abuse or neglect: *Foster Parent Investigation Retention Support Team* (FIRST) 1-253-219-6782, Monday – Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., or leave a message and receive a return call within 24 hours.

CA Foster Parent and Caregiver Crisis Line and general support on licensing and case management questions not abuse or neglect: *Caregiver Support/Crisis Line*: 1-800-301-1868. Weeknights from 4:30 p.m. – 8:00 a.m./weekends and holidays, 24 hours per day.

Family Help Line: 1-800-932-HOPE or www.parenttrust.org. The Family Help Line is a free, statewide training and referral line for the families of Washington State. Last year, the Family Help Line received over 5,000 calls and requests for information. Calls can last up to 90 minutes and parents can call as often as needed.

Children's Administration Foster Parent Website and Foster Parent Training Website

For information about Foster Parenting: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/>

For information about Foster Parent Training: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/training.asp>

Join the 400 people who have subscribed to the List Serve:(r) <http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=fosterparents&&A=1>

Washington State Mental Health Crisis Line: Crisis intervention is provided for mental health issues. Go to <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/mentalhealth/> to find the nearest telephone number for the crisis line.